

**THEMATIC CHOICE AND PROGRESSION IN STUDENTS'
EXPOSITORY ESSAYS OF IELTS ACADEMIC WRITING**

THESIS



ZEFKI OKTA FERI

NIM 17706251034

**Submitted to Graduate School of Yogyakarta State University as a partial
fulfilment for the Attainment of a *Magister of Education* in Applied
Linguistics**

**APPLIED LINGUISTICS STUDY PROGRAM GRADUATE SCHOOL
YOGYAKARTA STATE UNIVERSITY
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2019

ABSTRACT

ZEFKI OKTA FERI: Thematic Choice and Progression in Students' Expository Essays of IELTS Academic Writing. **Thesis. Yogyakarta: Graduate School, Yogyakarta State University, 2019.**

This research investigated Theme and thematic progression in students' expository essays of IELTS academic writing. The focus of this study is on analysing Theme types and thematic progression patterns realised in the essays. It also mapped the Themes and thematic progression patterns in the low and high scoring essays.

The study was essentially qualitative through content analysis with complementary quantitative data. The subject of this research is 40 expository essays of IELTS academic writing written by 40 students taking IELTS preparation program at Language Development Centre of Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta. There were also two groups of essays consisting of 24 essays analysed in this study, 12 low scoring and 12 high scoring essays. The unit of analysis of Theme types in this study was Halliday & Matthiessen (2004) thematic structure constituted of Themes and Rhemes realised in 878 clauses. Bloor & Bloor's (2004) thematic progression patterns were used to analyse the thematic progression.

Findings of this study reveal that all Theme types were present in students' expository essays and in both the low and high scoring essays. The highest number of occurrence is the Unmarked topical Theme, followed by Textual Theme, Marked topical Theme, and Interpersonal Theme. Interpersonal Theme is the least applied theme in the students' essays. Comparing both the low and high scoring essays, the high scoring essays elaborate more Themes than the low scoring essays. Each type of these Themes contributes to the students' text construction and to the flow of information. Moreover, the four patterns of thematic progression were also found in the students' essays. The highest number of occurrence is the linear Theme pattern, followed by the constant Theme pattern, the split Rheme pattern and derived Themes. Derived Themes is the least applied patterns in these essays. Each of these thematic progression patterns contributes in showing students' ideas organization. Comparing both the low and high scoring essays, the linear Theme pattern was applied mostly by the high achievers, indicating that they provides more elaborated ideas introduced in Rhemes. On the other hand, the constant Theme was used frequently by the low achievers, indicating that they tend to focus on particular specific subject that was reflected through theme reiteration. In conclusion, the use of various Themes and thematic progression patterns in students' essays support the nature of expository text particularly in development of argument. The appropriate use of these themes and thematic progression also contributes to successful text construction. In addition, both the low and high achievers employed themes and thematic progression differently. Thus, proficiency characterized students' in both their thematic choices and progression. It emphasizes that Theme and thematic progression are suggested to be included in writing instruction.

ABSTRAK

ZEFKI OKTA FERI: Pilihan dan Perkembangan Tematik dalam Teks Eksposisi *IELTS Academic Writing* Siswa. **Tesis. Yogyakarta: Program Pascasarjana, Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta, 2019**

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui pilihan-pilihan tematik dan perkembangannya dalam teks eksposisi siswa yang merupakan bagian dari *IELTS Academic Writing*. Fokus penelitian ini adalah bentuk-bentuk tema dan pola-pola perkembangan tematik yang terdapat dalam teks tersebut. Penelitian ini juga membandingkan bentuk-bentuk tema dan pola perkembangan tematik dalam teks-teks eksposisi yang bernilai rendah dan tinggi.

Penelitian ini adalah penelitian kualitatif menggunakan konten analisis dengan bantuan data kuantitatif. Terdapat 40 teks eksposisi yang dianalisa dalam penelitian ini. Teks-teks ini ditulis oleh siswa yang mengikuti program persiapan tes IELTS di lembaga Pusat Pengembangan Bahasa Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta pada akhir tahun 2018. Dalam hal kategori teks, penelitian ini membandingkan 24 teks yang terdiri dari 12 teks bernilai rendah dan 12 teks bernilai tinggi. Unit analisis dalam penelitian ini adalah struktur tematis yang dikembangkan oleh Halliday dan Matthiessen (2004) dan perkembangan tematik menggunakan kerangka Bloor dan Bloor (2004).

Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa semua bentuk tema muncul dalam teks eksposisi siswa secara keseluruhan termasuk teks yang bernilai rendah dan tinggi. Bentuk tema yang paling banyak muncul adalah tema topikal biasa, diikuti oleh tema tekstual, tema topikal tidak biasa dan tema interpersona. Tema interpersona merupakan tema yang paling sedikit digunakan. Dalam teks yang bernilai rendah dan tinggi, bentuk-bentuk tema ini lebih banyak digunakan pada teks yang bernilai tinggi dibandingkan. Masing-masing tema ini berkontribusi terhadap pengaturan informasi di dalam teks. Lebih jauh lagi, keempat bentuk pola perkembangan tematik juga ditemukan dalam teks-teks siswa. Pola yang paling banyak ditemukan adalah *The Linear Theme*, diikuti oleh *The Constant Theme*, *The Split Rheme*, dan *Derived Themes*. Pola *Derived Themes* merupakan pola yang paling sedikit digunakan. Semua pola ini menunjukkan perkembangan tema dalam teks siswa. Berdasarkan teks kategori, pola *The Linear Theme* paling banyak ditemukan dalam teks yang bernilai tinggi, yang menunjukkan bahwa siswa yang memperoleh nilai tinggi mengembangkan informasi yang mereka sampaikan dalam rema-remas. Sebaliknya, teks yang bernilai rendah lebih banyak menggunakan pola *The Constant Theme*, yang menunjukkan bahwa siswa yang bernilai rendah lebih fokus pada subjek tertentu tanpa mengembangkan lebih banyak informasi yang dikemukakan dalam rema. Jadi, dapat disimpulkan bahwa pilihan-pilihan tema dan perkembangan tematiknya membantu siswa dalam mengembangkan argumen. Lebih jauh lagi, penggunaan tema dan perkembangan tematik yang tepat dapat meningkatkan kualitas teks siswa. Di samping itu, pilihan-pilihan tema ini dipengaruhi oleh tingkat kemampuan bahasa siswa. Hal ini terlihat dari penggunaan tema dan perkembangan tematik yang berbeda antara siswa yang bernilai rendah dan tinggi. Oleh karenanya, tema dan perkembangan tema ini dapat dimasukkan dalam pengajaran menulis.

DECLARATION OF AUTHENTICITY

The undersigned below:

Name : Zefki Okta Feri

NIM : 17706251034

Major : Applied Linguistics

Faculty : Postgraduate Program

Thesis Title : Thematic Choice and Progression in Students' Expository Essays of IELTS Academic Writing

Declares consciously that this thesis is true result of my own work and thought with no published contents and works, except certain parts taken as references and therefore have been stated in the text along with the citation sources.

Yogyakarta, August 20th, 2019



Zefki Okta Feri

NIM. 17706251034

RATIFICATION SHEET

THEMATIC CHOICE AND PROGRESSION IN STUDENTS' EXPOSITORY ESSAYS OF IELTS ACADEMIC WRITING

ZEFKI OKTA FERI

17706251034

Accepted by the board of examiners of Graduate School,
Yogyakarta State University on August 7th 2019, and declared to have fulfilled the
requirements for attainment of the Master of Education in Applied Linguistics

BOARD OF EXAMINERS

Prof. Dr. Pratomo Widodo
(Chairperson/Examiner)

 12/8 2019

Basikin, Ph.D.
(Secretary/Examiner)

 12/8 2019

Dra. Pangesti Wiedarti, Ph.D.
(Supervisor/Examiner)

 15/8 2019

Ashadi, Ed.D.
(Main Examiner)

 12/9 2019

Yogyakarta, 19-8-2019
Graduate School
Yogyakarta State University

Director,


Prof. Dr. M. A.

NIP. 19570719 198303 1 004

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I wish that may Allah the Almighty repay all of them with the best reward. As the researcher, I also expect that this thesis may contribute to the development of knowledge in applied linguistics especially in Systemic Functional Linguistic studies. Any criticism and suggestion toward this thesis are welcomed.

Yogyakarta, August 20th, 2019

The Researcher

A handwritten signature in dark ink, consisting of a stylized 'Z' followed by a horizontal line and a small loop.

Zefki Okta Feri

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